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Harvard College Library

FROM

*The Author.*

*26 Oct. 1893.*

Harvard  
College  
Library

IV. 4228

# INDICATORS *versus* CARD-CHARGING

WITH SOME REFERENCE TO THE

INTERCOURSE BETWEEN LIBRARIAN & READER.

A Paper read before the Library Association, Monday, July 10th, 1893,  
and reprinted from "The Library" by permission of the Editor.

*SM 7*  
*Alfred*  
By A. COTGREAVE, F.R.HIST.S.,

*Chief Librarian of the Public Libraries, West Ham, and Honorary Librarian of  
the Guille-Allès Library and Museum, Guernsey.*

2

London:

JOHN BALE & SONS,

87-89, GREAT TITCHFIELD STREET, OXFORD STREET, W.

1893.

B7927.5

26 Oct, 1893.

The author.

# PREFATORY NOTE.

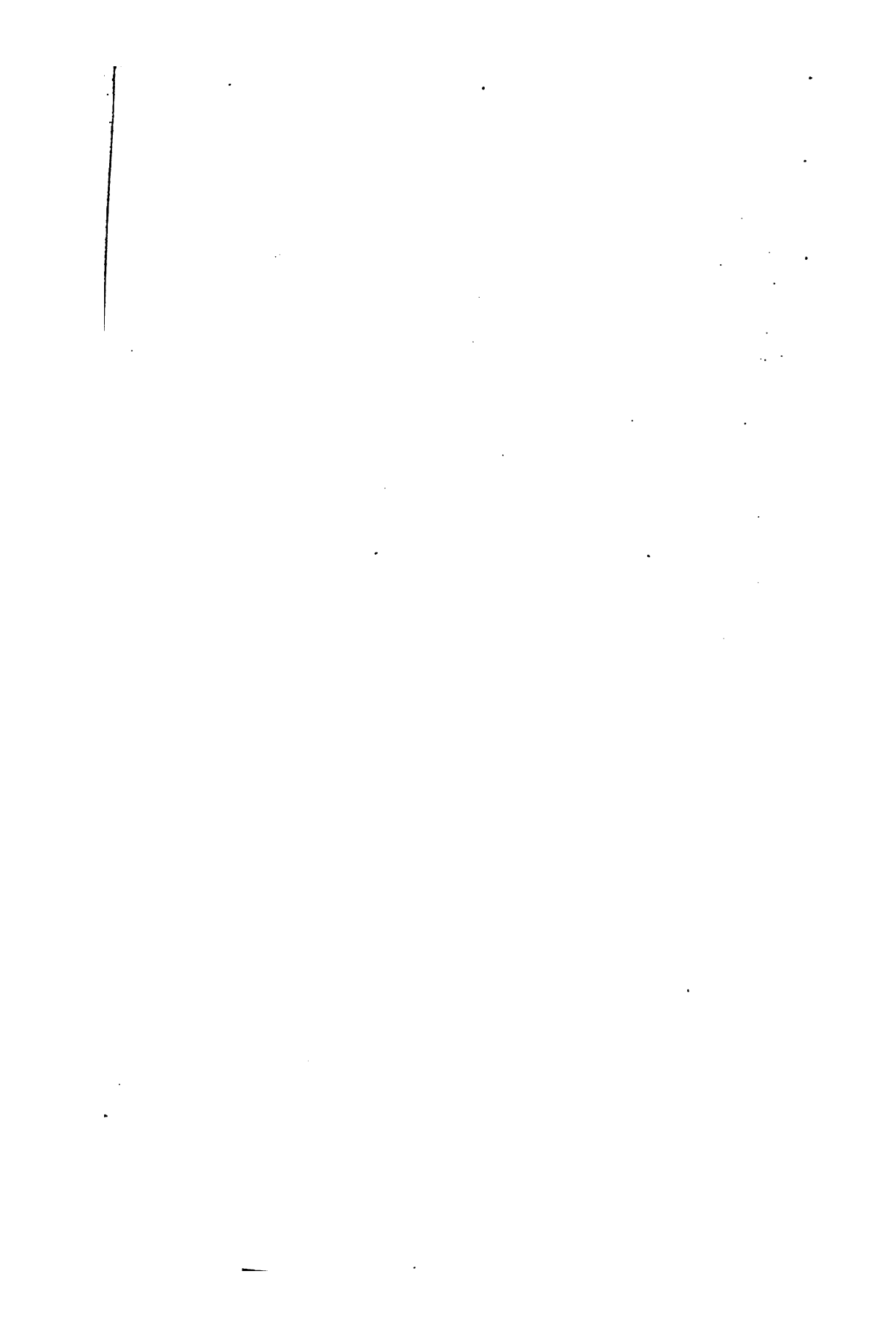
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THE following paper has been written with but one object, viz., that of giving fuller information to those who may hitherto have had only one side of the question presented to them. Many absurd statements have been made from time to time by persons of a vivid imagination, but with no actual experience, concerning the difficulties connected with the minute figures, date slides, &c., required in working the Indicator, but it is worthy of note that only those who have never used an Indicator, and, maybe, one or two persons who have *mis-used* it, make these remarks, while the many hundreds of librarians and assistants who actually and properly use it are more than satisfied.

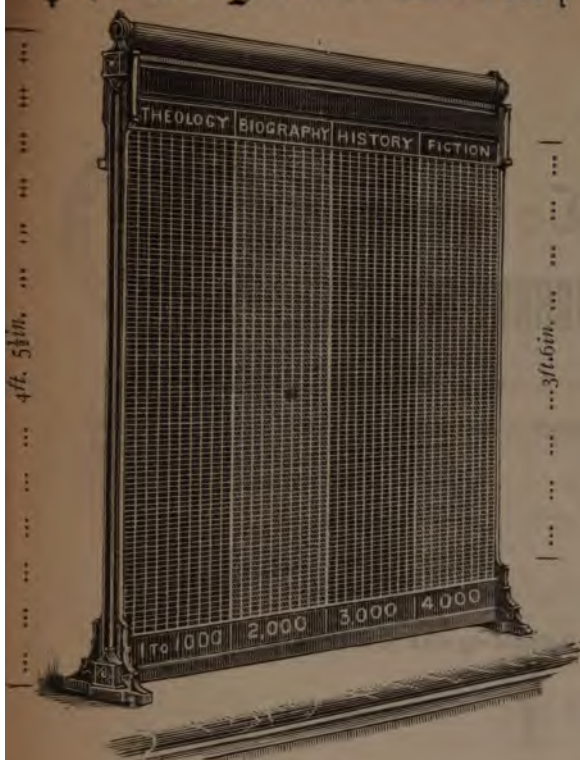
Card-charging is all very well where want of space or some other legitimate difficulty stands in the way of the Indicator, but the superiority of the Indicator is emphatically proved by the testimony of those who have used both systems separately, as well as together, and whose evidence goes conclusively to prove that the Indicator worked in its entirety and untrammelled by being mixed up with something else, is the best system by far, both for simplicity and efficacy, and no *disinterested* librarian will contend that the opinions of theorists or faddists should be accepted in preference to those of persons who have actually worked a thing-on its merits and as designed by its originator.

If any Librarian or other gentleman interested in the comparative advantages of this and other systems, instead of accepting as conclusive the first expression of disapproval aimed at the Indicator, will communicate with me, I will undertake to fully convince him of the incorrectness and injustice of such statements, and also to prove to him by the written testimony of hundreds of well-known Librarians the incalculable advantages connected with the use of the Indicator. As regards the assertion made about the Indicator being an obstacle to cordial intercourse between Librarian and Reader, preventing readers seeking advice, &c., the same answer applies as before, viz., that such statements are only made by those who have never used it. Those persons desiring the truth need only consult any Librarian using an Indicator to ascertain conclusively how unfounded and misleading these statements are. A perusal of the following paper may also tend to clear away many misapprehensions that have hitherto existed.

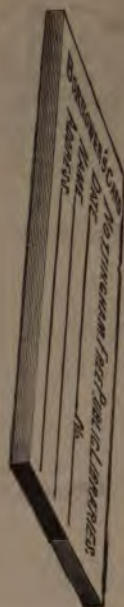
ALFRED COTGREAVE.



# The Cotgreave Library Indicator.



... 5 ft. 1 1/2 in. ...  
A COTGREAVE INDICATOR FOR 4,000 NUMBERS.



BORROWER'S TICKET



TICKET AND TICKET CASE.



Blue in. Red out.  
INDICATOR BOOK WITHDRAWN FROM THE INDICATOR RACK.

The ends of the Indicator Books are in different colours, so that by reversing them in the rack the various books represented are shown in or out.

P.T.O.



THE

# Cotgreave LIBRARY INDICATOR,



**For showing the Books or Magazines put on loan, and  
keeping a record of them.**

*Honourable Mention, International Health Exhibition, London.*

*Prize Medal, Highest Award, International Inventions  
Exhibition, London.*



## **Reasons for Adopting the Cotgreave Indicator.**

1. Because, with very few exceptions, every new Library now adopts it.
2. It has been adopted with great success by more than 250 Libraries in England and the Colonies. In London alone thirty Libraries under the "Acts" are using it.
3. The Librarians using it have, collectively, used every other system previously, and assert the Cotgreave to be by far the best.
4. It reduces the losses of books from hundreds to a mere nominal figure. In some cases several years have elapsed since its adoption without the loss of a single book.
5. It can, if desired, be made to supersede all other book-keeping, acting as a Stock Book, Shelf Catalogue, Binding Book, Issue Book, Record of Issues, and Borrowers' Ledger; also giving the titles, authors, dates of publication, volumes, and other particulars of every book.
6. If desired, stock-taking can at any time be carried out without calling in the books, which deprives the borrowers of their use for several weeks each year.

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7. It facilitates the work of the staff, and reduces the cost of working the Library. At Norwood Public Library 1,200 books were issued in one day by only two assistants, aided by the Cotgreave Indicator.

8. It is a great convenience to the borrowers, who can see what books are *in* or *out* before asking for any, and who are served in one quarter the time taken under other systems. It is more simple, more slightly, and requires much less room than any other indicator.

9. This system has been commended as the best by many hundreds of the leading authorities of England and America, the Colonies, and elsewhere.

Mr. Gladstone, Archdeacon Farrar, Sir John Lubbock, the Duke and Duchess of Rutland, the late Prince Leopold, and many other equally distinguished supporters of Libraries and literature have frequently eulogised it, and advised Library authorities to adopt it. The leading journals have on many occasions noticed it favourably.

10. Not only Public Libraries under the "Acts" adopt it, but also Technical Institutes and other educational institutions. It is worthy of note in this connection, that the Goldsmiths' Company recently adopted it for their splendid Technical Institute at New Cross recently opened by the Prince of Wales.

11. Wherever a comparison of the various systems, including the Cotgreave, has been made, the Cotgreave has been adopted.

The Library authorities of Edinburgh, Nottingham, Leeds, Worcester, and many other large towns, visited all the principal English Libraries, and inspected the various systems, deciding finally to adopt the Cotgreave as by far the best.

12. It is cheaper in the end than any other, as its first cost is all; whereas the other systems require an annual outlay on expensive book tickets, ledgers, and other auxiliaries, which soon increase their cost to one far exceeding the cost of the Cotgreave Indicator.

N.B.—Any Librarian adopting the Cotgreave Indicator is earnestly advised to rely thoroughly upon it in its integrity, neither taking from, nor adding to; when its inventor will guarantee it to give the most thorough satisfaction in every particular.

The inventor has had the charge of ten Public Libraries. Four of these Libraries he entirely organized, the last completed one containing 70,000 vols., and he is now engaged in forming Libraries for West Ham, which will ultimately contain a still larger number of books. He may, perhaps, therefore, be allowed to possess an experience that should render him a competent judge of what Libraries and their readers require.

P.T.O.

## Description of the Indicator and Method of Working it.

It consists of a wooden or iron frame, fitted with minute zinc shelves, generally 100 in a column. Upon each of these shelves is placed a small metal bound ledger, numbered at each end, and arranged numerically in the frames, containing a number of leaves, ruled and headed for number of borrower's ticket, and date of issue; also date of return if required. One part of it is also lettered for entries of date of purchase, title of book, &c. The metal case is coloured red at one end, and blue at the other, one colour showing books *out*, the other, books *in*. The change of colour is effected by simply reversing the ledger in the indicator frame. The public side of the indicator is protected by glass.

The *modus operandi* is as follows:—A borrower having chosen a book from the catalogue, consults the indicator, and finding the required number to be on *blue*, denoting *in*, asks for the book corresponding, at the same time tendering his library ticket. The assistant withdraws the indicator ledger, makes the necessary entries, inserts borrower's ticket, and reverses the ledger, which then shows the *red* colour, signifying *out*. He then hands out the book asked for. The borrower's ticket will remain in this number until he changes his book, when his ticket will, of course, be transferred to the next number required, and the returned number will be reversed again, showing, by the *blue* colour, that the book it represents is again *in*.

When a book is not required, the ticket is returned to the borrower, and acts as a receipt, exonerating him from liability.

Another method adopted in the St. Martin's and Lambeth Central Libraries with great success is as follows:—A few shallow boxes or trays divided into numerous small compartments, each of which is just large enough to contain an indicator book and borrower's ticket, are kept on the desk or table at which sits the Librarian or official in charge. As each book is given out the indicator book corresponding and the borrower's ticket are placed in one of these trays, red end of indicator book upwards. At convenient intervals the official in charge makes the necessary entries in the indicator books and passes them into another tray with the blue end upwards, also at same time making such entries in the register of issues for statistical purposes as may be required. When this tray is full it is taken away by one of the assistants, and the indicator books it contains are returned to their proper places in the indicator with the red end towards the public.

This is an admirable plan for large libraries where it may be considered desirable for all the entries to be made by the more responsible officials. The Cotgreave indicator is the only one by which it can be worked.

For testimonials, press notices and further particulars of this and other Library Appliances, viz. the Periodical Rack; Automatic Book-case Step; Solid Leather Periodical Covers; Combined Stationery and Letter Case, &c.; designed by the same inventor, apply to A. COTGREAVE, Public Libraries, West Ham, London, England.

## Indicators *versus* Card-Charging ; with some reference to the intercourse between Librarian and Reader.<sup>1</sup>

**I**N a previous issue of *THE LIBRARY*, an article appeared entitled "A Card-charging System for Lending Libraries," and had the author rested content with an explanation of the mode of work and an enumeration of the merits claimed for that system, I should not have considered it necessary to trespass upon your valuable time with any comments of mine. As, however, he took occasion to make remarks respecting another system, not altogether complimentary to those who advocate its use, and also likely to mislead the uninformed, I trust I may be permitted to give expression to other views, which are slightly different to those he represents.

My remarks about indicators will apply only to those best known in this country.

In the first place it should be borne in mind that the main question in making a comparison such as Mr. Quinn has attempted, is not what is good or bad about this or that system, but which is the best one taking it all round ; in other words, which will accomplish the most with the least labour, worry, and loss of time.

It may be conceded that the card-charging system is an improvement upon the old ledger and posting-book systems, but it has, in my opinion, many weak points, and does not accomplish the ends attainable with a good indicator properly worked, *i.e.*, worked as originally designed, and not clogged with all kinds of so-called improvements, additional checks, card-charging systems, &c.

It would be a miracle if it did give satisfaction to anyone using it in such a manner. Some librarians, however, seem to think that unless an indicator accomplishes such miracles it is a failure, and that consequently part of their mission in life is to asperse it in every way they can.

If, as is stated in Mr. Quinn's paper, some librarians use extra books—and (shall we add?) card-charging—thereby increasing the labour, that is not the fault of the indicator but of those who

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<sup>1</sup> Read before the Library Association, Monday, July 10th, 1893.

do these things. There is no reason why any librarian should not make some slight arrangements to suit any special requirements of his library, so long as he does not carry them to an extent that defeats the purpose of the indicator, and then blame it for any increase of labour, or inaccuracy occurring. I am unaware of any cases, however, where such extensive additions have been made, as have been enlarged upon, except one or two connected with the Liverpool system which Mr. Quinn advocates. In all other libraries using the indicator the slight additions or alterations made are such as in no way impair its utility; consequently, it has performed what was claimed for it in a perfectly satisfactory manner.

The indicator will do all that is claimed for it even by advertisers, as can readily be testified by hundreds who use it fairly, and judge of it without prejudice, and so far is it from "enabling a librarian to hide his knowledge, or the want of it, behind its ample frame-work," that on the contrary, his assistants being, with its aid, able to do all the mechanical work, his own time is saved and he is at liberty to give such services as are *not* mechanical to those who may reasonably require them, while at the same time he is spared many unnecessary and even childish enquiries.

That "comparisons are odious" is often sagely remarked by those who probably do not shine under the ordeal, and when not challenged, as in this case, are perhaps best avoided, but under the circumstances, I must beg leave to make them, hoping to do so in a fair and equitable manner without wounding anyone's susceptibilities, and, even if a want of knowledge be apparent to some, with at least as much good taste and consideration for other opinions as is shown by those who advocate Liverpool systems.

I will commence by enumerating the chief points of inadequacy in the card-charging system :—

(1) It does not save the time of the staff wasted in looking for books that are already out, unless supplemented by the use of an indicator, and even then two operations are necessary instead of one.

(2) It requires pockets in all the books—no light work, I should imagine, to carry out in any large library adopting this system. These pockets are also an extra strain upon the binding.

(3) An unscrupulous borrower may get out more books on his ticket than he is entitled to, unless a second set of charging-

cards or some such record is kept representing borrowers; this necessitates extra work, and reference must be made to the record every time a borrower presents his ticket without a book. I query whether this is done on a busy night, but, if so, note should be taken of the time wasted and the number of people kept waiting.

(4) Should a book be out it is difficult to ascertain its whereabouts, especially in any class having a large issue, as the cards of each day's issue might have to be looked through before finding the one required.

(5) The delay caused in searching for the charging-card upon the return of the book is inconvenient.

It has been urged that this operation may stand over when a large number of people are at the counters, except in cases of renewals or transfers, but the larger the number of persons to serve the more renewals and transfers are there to be expected, and these must be effected at the time unless a temporary record book is kept at hand. This again would involve additional entries, and with a large issue would demand no small amount of time and labour. It is a question which is the lesser evil of the two. In the temporary record a little time may be saved on the immediate transaction, but it must be remembered that all the necessary entries on the charging-cards still remain to be made.

Another serious feature is the loss for the time being of a large number of the most popular books, which are unobtainable by the borrowers for some while, through not being marked off at once. This is no trifling matter in the case of a large circulation such as that of a public library, and it no doubt prevents many readers from ever getting certain books required unless they bespeak them.

(6) The old grievance about books being kept for a favoured few at the expense of the many, or the complaint that lazy assistants state volumes on top shelves to be out when they are in, become as common among borrowers with this as with any older system. An indicator only will relieve their feelings on these points, and justly so, as to show books to be *out* that are *in* the indicator must be tampered with—which even a bad assistant hesitates in doing. As to the second matter of complaint, an assistant, however lazy, *must* look for any book applied for, if shown to be in by the indicator, even if it is on a top shelf at the far end of the library. Even should it be misplaced it must be looked for and found, or its absence reported to the

librarian. Can it be possible that this is one of the secret grudges against the long-suffering indicator, that it immediately shows up mistakes or careless work which under other systems are generally undetected?

In libraries not using an indicator, if books are misplaced they are reported out when asked for, and may be lost to the readers for several months, which I think most librarians will agree is a serious matter, and in itself a strong reason for adopting any system that will remedy it. Other failings of card-charging may be noticed on some future occasion, if called for.

Now it may be quite possible that with some persons such matters as those named are not worth consideration, but I strongly contend that to any librarian who studies the interests of his readers they are all-important, and I submit that in a technical comparison of library systems such points cannot be overlooked.

That in the indicator system all these special difficulties are successfully met, with a minimum of labour and a maximum of gain, I will endeavour to prove:—

(1) Every borrower can see if the required book is in before asking for it, and those who, while admiring the indicator, prefer attendance without its aid, would probably do without any aid, save their own—in other words, they would prefer no system at all, not even the card-charging one; in choosing books, too, they might even decline the aid of librarians whose book-knowledge, according to Mr. Quinn, enables them to dispense with that protection given by the indicator to less favoured ones. These readers would be best pleased with a state of things under which they could help themselves, and carry away any books they liked, after misplacing several, and leaving others on the floor, tables, or in other positions where they did not find them, the knowledge that they had done so adding perchance a zest to their reading which minds like theirs could fully appreciate.

(2) No arrangement is necessary in adapting the books or library to the indicator system, such as putting pockets in all the books, &c. It is all the other way about—the indicator is made to suit the library, not the library to suit the indicator; and it can be adopted in any library without change, except that of giving up the old charging system. Of course the old system or some portion of it may be retained if desired, but if this is done some of the advantages of an indicator must be sacrificed.

(3) No one can get out more than one book on one ticket, as the ticket is always retained in the indicator number when a book is out: the borrower can therefore only present the ticket itself when no book is debited to it. It also acts as a receipt for the return of his last book, an arrangement which gives general satisfaction.

Another very useful feature is that should it be necessary to stop a person's ticket, enforce a fine, or to discuss any other matter with him, there is no necessity to depend upon the memory, or memorandum book, or other fallacious methods of reminding you when next he visits the library—methods which generally operate just before he comes in, or after he has gone, scarcely ever when he is present. But by placing a slip of instructions in his ticket in the indicator, the assistant serving him is bound to see it and report at once to the librarian, who can then deal with the matter in question.

This might be accomplished with the card system if the books were marked off directly on their return, but as Mr. Quinn admits, this is not always done; the card with the necessary note may not be seen until the borrower has gone.

As a tell-tale it is useful not only in the above way, but also in the following matters: by placing special slides over the numbers of books in binding or repair, lost, bespoke, overdue, &c., the librarian and his staff have an ever-present and always visible monitor as to the state of the library, and are not dependent upon looking through various book records, a duty which at any time I fear is more frequently honoured in the breach than in the observance thereof.

(4) The whereabouts of any book and all other necessary information is instantly attainable, for the borrower's ticket in the indicator number representing any book out, gives name and address at once, and thus does away with the need of referring to the borrowers' index or vouchers, as in the Liverpool system.

(5) In renewing or transferring, the borrower is not obliged to bring either book or date, the number or title being sufficient, and as the indicator numbers are all visible the transaction is effected in a few seconds, and no work of any kind need be left undone after closing time.

(6) The borrowers themselves see by the indicator which books are *in* or *out*, and are not dependent upon what any boy behind the counter may tell them. In the words of an esteemed member of this Association, speaking of the indicator, "my

borrowers are delighted with it," especially as they are able to obtain any books directly they are returned by other borrowers. Of course it is possible that this gentleman's borrowers may not be so intelligent as those previously alluded to, who admire the indicator but prefer attendance without its aid, thereby giving other borrowers, waiting to be served, a lesson in patience, while the assistants are roaming all over the library looking for books that are out. These people, however, seem to forget that their own turn to wait must also come in due course.

Mr. Quinn credits the indicator with other merits not generally claimed for it, and some librarians may understand and appreciate his graceful allusion to the extent of their knowledge, which he evidently measures by the extent to which they use and rely upon the indicator, only in inverse proportion. The inference so delicately conveyed should not be lost, and doubtless the general impression ought to be how profound must be the knowledge of those who do not admire indicators, but who advocate the card-charging system as adopted at Liverpool instead.

I fear, however, in spite of all efforts, there will still remain many librarians unconverted, some of whom, inconceivable though it may appear to card-charging advocates, are men of recognised literary ability, and, what is stranger still, who rely almost entirely upon the indicator for the work it claims to accomplish. In this connection I may refer to those who contend for the use of an indicator solely to indicate books *in* or *out* and advise some other system of charging in addition. The two principal objections to this are, that in the first place the work is doubled without any corresponding advantage, and in the second the indicator is almost sure to be inefficiently worked, as the assistant, if busy, may frequently forget to alter it, and when he does attend to it there is no borrower's card there or other arrangement by which he is checked, should he go to the wrong number. As to the minute figures necessary, as some say, for the entries in the indicator book, or borrower's book ticket, if used, I contend that any assistant able to write decent figures will have no difficulty whatever in making perfectly legible entries. Of course I would not recommend that the worst writer on the staff should be selected for this or any other clerical work requiring neatness.

Some persons argue that the indicator is suitable for small libraries but not for large ones, while on the contrary others are of

opinion that it is suitable for large libraries only. In reference to these views I will merely point out that many of the largest as well as of the smallest libraries in the kingdom are now using this system, with every satisfaction to themselves and their readers. To quote a famous poet, "facts are chieftains that winna ding," and though according to some theorists the indicator ought to be a failure, as a fact it is not, except to one or two who have handled it from the very first in a wrong manner. I may perhaps be permitted here to refer to the opinions of three prominent members of this Association, who have an intimate knowledge of both indicator and card-charging, especially of what is called the Liverpool system.

No. 1 says: "Given the indicator by itself it is good; mix it with something else, it is bad; and surely the common sense of most people will teach them this plain fact, and they should not criticise the instrument as toyed and played with by Dick, Tom, and Harry."

No. 2 says: "It gives every satisfaction to me and my readers, and I can find nothing equal to it in any of the libraries about here."

No. 3 says: "Eleven years' experience of its working confirms me in my good opinion of it, though I believe it has been sadly handicapped in some places by supplementary booking and charging systems which are entirely superfluous."

Many other letters expressing similar views have been received.

In the last issue of *THE LIBRARY*, a letter appears calling attention to some merits of the Liverpool card system not named in Mr. Quinn's paper, which are pointed out as superior to similar arrangements in the indicator. As they affect the question before us I will deal with them now.

(1) The writer states that should a book be replaced without being marked off, it is found out by the absence of the card from the pocket. I answer, that by the use of the indicator a better method prevails, as each borrower receives his ticket back upon returning a book; consequently it is impossible to hold him any longer responsible.

(2) He points out that by turning up the charging-card of any book out that may be required, the applicant can be informed when it is due back, and a note made that he requires it; *i.e.*, this can be done when the card is found, which may be in No. 1 lot of cards, or in No. 31, and it is almost certain not to be in the

first lot examined. Now with the indicator the number required *shows itself*, and the assistant goes *direct to it*, and effects the necessary transaction in a few seconds. Yet this correspondent contends that the work is done more quickly by the Liverpool system. It is scarcely necessary to point out the absurdity of this statement, but it is a fair type of the argument used in support of this method.

One objection which is sometimes advanced against indicators is, that they interfere with the communion or intercourse between the librarian and his readers. I will endeavour to show that this objection is altogether sentimental. There might be something in it if the librarian was always at the counter, and had to work the indicator himself, but in very few libraries is this the case.

Indicator or no indicator, he will generally locate himself in his office, or some quiet spot where he can attend to his catalogue, book-lists, committee work, accounts, or other important matters, only with an indicator he has double the time at his disposal, and when his services are *specially* required by any borrower they are more available, as the sub-librarian will be more at liberty to do part of the work that would otherwise fall entirely upon his chief. More intercourse than this, in the lending department, is not desirable, as it is apt to lead to intimacies and conversations on general subjects before the staff, thus setting them a bad example and encouraging the readers to ignore the catalogue altogether.

Yet another consideration : however able, well-read and impartial any librarian may be, he can only personally attend to a few out of the number who wish to consult him—a number constantly increasing. Further than this, he would be frequently asked for books on all sorts of out-of-the-way subjects, to many of which there might be only some short references in altogether unlikely books—references of which he could not possibly in all cases be aware. To quote from an article in the *American Educational Review* on the "Libraries of Europe:" "The librarian of the Bodleian once gave a gentleman, Mr. J. Howard Gore, a batch of titles of works on a subject of which he was a historian and bibliographer ; several of these were new to him, which fact led him to the conclusion that nobody knew all the literature of any subject, and that a good subject catalogue or index was the best guide." My own opinion is that the best guide, at any rate in a busy lending library, is a mechanical one

in all its simplicity, *i.e.*, a catalogue containing an index or synopsis of the principal and most striking contents of all the best and most suitable books in the library, a guide which would not be subject to forgetfulness or absence on account of meals, illness, &c., but would be an ever-present help, not only to readers, but to librarian and staff as well. Possessing such an aid the librarian need only give his services to those readers who require advice as to the special character of any work on science, history, politics, &c., appearing in the catalogue. Further than this a librarian ought not to be expected to go, and in fact is not able to go except to limited extent. In proof of this I will guarantee to visit any public library and ask for works containing some special information on proper subjects such as persons or places that could not be found for me without the aid of some such guide as I suggest, and if the librarian himself has to use such a guide, why not place it within reach of the readers and thus save his own time for other duties?

In the reference department, where generally not more than twenty or thirty readers in one day would require advice from the librarian, his personal services might very properly and usefully be given; but even here if a card-catalogue is used, valuable references can be continually inserted that would be of immediate assistance, and always available to the readers.

In these days of progress and change, old ideas and predilections must give way, and when we consider the wonderful increase in books and readers, both multiplying more rapidly every year, it becomes evident that man's individual power being limited, it must, in the management of a library, as in other branches of public business, be supplemented by mechanical aids that will save time and labour. These, surely, should not be deprecated simply because they are mechanical, or because they are advertised. Why should not an indicator, or any other design, be advertised as well as a book? I have yet to learn that the works of Carlyle, Ruskin, Herbert Spencer, or other great writers, have declined in public estimation simply because they are so well advertised. I take it that if a thing is really good it cannot—in the public interest—be advertised too much.

In conclusion, it is with pleasure I admit the ability of Mr. Quinn's paper, but for which I should not have trespassed this evening upon your time and patience, and I am inclined to think that where it is difficult, owing to some special cause or other to introduce the indicator, the card-charging system may be the

best alternative. This opinion, formed after reading his interesting paper, he may be able to reciprocate after hearing my reply, at least to the extent of allowing that librarians may use indicators and *even advocate their use in all their mechanical simplicity*, without evincing thereby a want of knowledge; otherwise I fear he will condemn a large number of librarians, some three hundred or more, who use and are thoroughly satisfied with the indicator system.

It is desirable that any references in my paper to Mr. Quinn's argument should not be considered personal, but simply as a legitimate consequence of the statements he made, and as being necessary in a paper intended to refute them.

I am much obliged to him for the opportunity he has given me of expressing the views of those who lean to the other side of the question, and I trust that our two papers, *pro* and *con*, will help those interested to more satisfactorily decide which system to adopt.

ALFRED COTGREAVE.

"ATHENÆUM."

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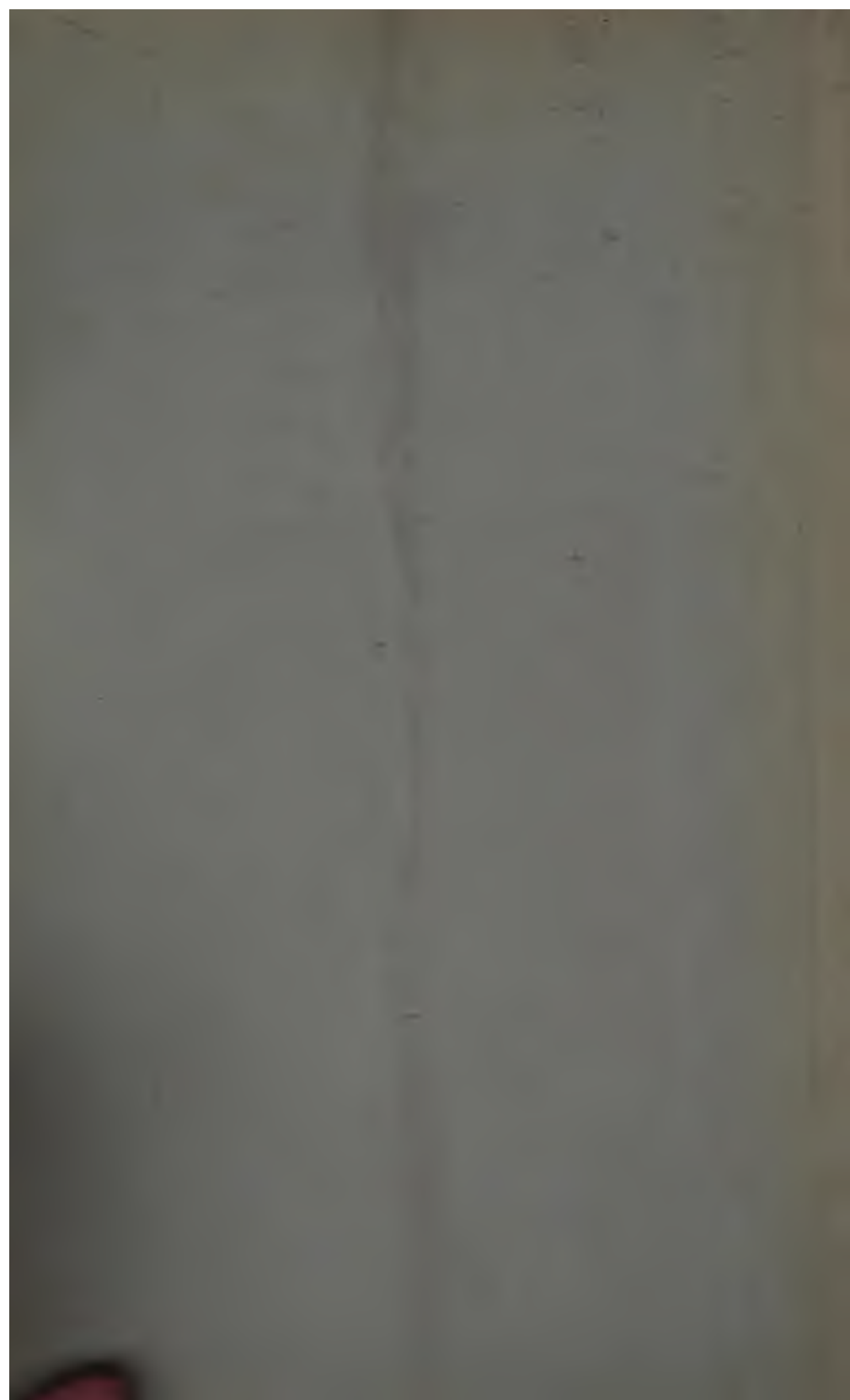
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The Catalogue which Mr. COTGREAVE has compiled for the Guille-Allès Library, Guernsey, is a masterpiece of bibliography. I have pleasure in thanking Mr. COTGREAVE for the practical aid he has given me with my book on Free Libraries. He has displayed great administrative skill in his management of these Institutions, and has given a powerful impetus to the work in London and elsewhere.



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